



# Welcome to Reviewing Against the Selection Criteria- Evaluation Review and Ensuring Equitable Reviews

2015 Social Innovation Fund Review  
**Orientation Session IV and Ensuring Equitable Reviews**



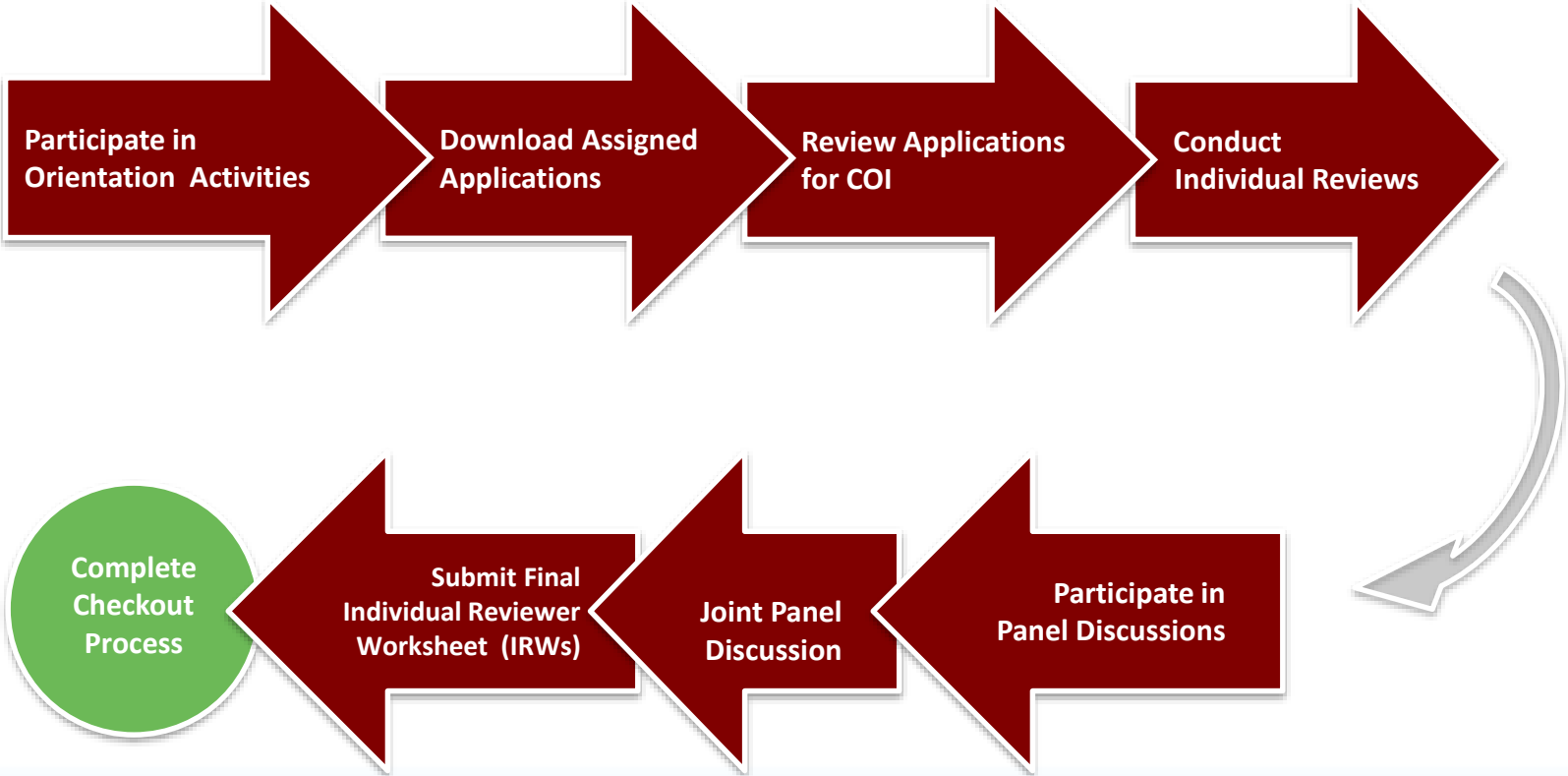
# SESSION AGENDA:

- Competition Overview & Criteria
- Reviewing Against Evaluation Selection Criteria

# Objectives of this Training

- Detail the steps of the Review Process
- Discuss your role in the review of the applications
  - Conducting your individual review
- Understand the review forms and how they are used
  - The Individual Reviewer Worksheet (IRW)
    - Evaluation Review
  - Applicant Feedback Summary Report

# External Review Process



# Review Preparation

- Complete all training requirements
  - 2015 Social Innovation Fund Review Handbook
  - The Notice
  - Orientation Sessions
- Receive Panel Assignments
  - Reviewers will Download Assigned Applications
  - Participate in Panel Intro Call (order of applications is determined, panel schedule, etc.)
- Review each application for COI
  - Submit your signed Confidentiality and COI Statement
- Begin Review!



# Individual Review of Applications

- Applications will be reviewed and discussed in two sets
- Read the entire application and evaluate the sections on your Evaluation IRW
  - Assess the applications against the Selection Criteria, not other applications
  - Apply your experience and expertise with balance
- Complete your critique of the elements in your IRW
  - Select Rating and comment on Strengths and Weaknesses
  - Utilize appropriate Forms as resource
    - Individual Review Rubric
    - Example Evaluation IRW



Conduct  
Individual  
Reviews

# Completing the IRW Evaluation Reviewers

INDIVIDUAL REVIEWER WORKSHEET -EVALUATION  
2015 Social Innovation Fund Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Application ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Assess the extent to which the applicant addresses each of the elements of the application. Select a Rating for each element; provide comments for each Rating. All comments should address the significant strengths and weaknesses identified in your assessment that justify your Rating.

**PROGRAM DESIGN**  
**Proposal for Evaluation (30%)**  
In determining the quality please assess the following criteria:

- Applicant's capacity to ensure successful evaluation(s) of their portfolio as demonstrated by:
  - Experience in managing and supporting evaluations of past funded program models;
  - Experience influencing and supporting recipients to use evidence to improve program performance;
  - Demonstrated ability to apply evidence/evaluation results to decision-making and investment strategies;
  - Staff or contractor ability to ensure successful evaluation of their subrecipients' program models.
- The quality of the applicant's plan to assess subrecipient applicants for readiness and capacity to implement a rigorous evaluation plan that would achieve moderate or strong levels of evidence over a three to five year period.
- The adequacy of the applicant's plan to assess needs for and provide technical assistance to subrecipients as they design, implement, and monitor evaluations of their program models, including a description of the role of staff and contractors.
  - Strategy A:* Whether the applicant presented a reasonable plan for assessing the evidence level of the solutions being proposed by prospective subrecipients. or
  - Strategy B:* Whether the applicant's evaluation strategy is likely to result in funded program models achieving at least moderate levels of evidence over a three to five year grant period.
- The applicant's description of how their budget will support the cost of reasonable evaluation activities that will meet the Social Innovation Fund evaluation requirements.
  - Strategy A:* Whether the applicant made the case that there are existing program models that align with their rationale and approach with at least preliminary levels of effectiveness and the potential to achieve at least moderate levels of evidence of effectiveness during their Social Innovation Fund grant period of three to five years.
  - Strategy B:* Whether the applicant proposed solution(s) has at least a preliminary level of evidence and has the potential to increase its level of evidence under the Social Innovation Fund, and achieve at least a moderate level of evidence of effectiveness. (See definitions in *Section A.4.d*). Have they cited the research that supports their assessment?
- If the applicant is applying to more rigorously evaluate a previously funded Social Innovation Fund project: whether the evaluation strategy is likely to result in an increased level of evidence.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

_ Excellent (30)	_ Good (24)	_ Fair (12)	_ Inadequate(12)
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Total Score: \_\_ of 30

INDIVIDUAL REVIEWER WORKSHEET -EVALUATION  
2015 Social Innovation Fund Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Application ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**9. APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY**  
After the panel discussion and finalizing your assessment, provide a summary of your review that captures the strengths and weaknesses of the application that had the greatest impact on your assessment. This summary, which will be provided to the applicant in the Feedback Summary Report and may be posted on CNCS' website, must be supported by your ratings and comments in the previous section.

STRENGTHS:

WEAKNESSES:

# SIF SELECTION CRITERIA & WEIGHTING

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Inadequate
<b>PROGRAM DESIGN (70%)</b>				
a. Rationale and Approach	10	8	6	4
a. Proposal for Subrecipient Selection	15	12	9	6
a. Proposal for Evaluation	30	24	18	12
a. Proposal for Growing Subrecipient Impact	15	12	9	6
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY (15%)</b>				
a. Organizational Background and Staff Capacity	5	4	3	2
a. Subrecipient Support, Monitoring and Oversight	5	4	3	2
a. Strategy for Sustainability	5	4	3	2
<b>COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY (15%)</b>	15	12	9	6
Totals	100	80	60	40

# Evaluation Individual Reviewer Form

**INDIVIDUAL REVIEWER WORKSHEET**  
**2015 Social Innovation Fund Grant Competition**  
**EVALUATION REVIEW**

Legal Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Application ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- 45 pages of narratives as they print from eGrants for Facesheet, Executive Summary, and Narratives.
- Performance Measures and budget do not count as part of the 45 pages.

# Using the Rubric

## Excellent

- A high-quality, detailed response that addresses all aspects of the Selection Criteria and exceeds some. Strengths are substantial and solid. No weaknesses are identified, or any weakness has a minimal effect on the overall quality of the response. A high confidence that the proposed activities will achieve and exceed the anticipated results.

## Good

- A quality response that addresses most or all aspects of the Selection Criteria. Strengths are substantial, but do not exceed what is required. Weaknesses are low in quantity and minimal in effect on the overall quality of the response. Proposed activities should achieve the anticipated results.

# Using the Rubric cont.

## Fair

- Response addresses some to most aspects of the Selection Criteria, but makes assumptions and leaves aspects unexplained. Strengths are not significant, and some weaknesses affect the overall quality of the response, demonstrating room for improvement. It is unclear how the proposed activities will achieve all of the anticipated results.

## Inadequate

- A low-quality or very weak response that does not address most of the Selection Criteria. Overall response is lacking or inadequate making assumptions in key elements. Weaknesses relating to vague or inaccurate detail are numerous or significantly outweigh the strengths. There is low to zero confidence that the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.

# Question 1. Description of Activities: Proposal for Evaluation

## PROGRAM DESIGN

### Proposal for Evaluation (30%)

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# 2. APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY COMMENTS

Total Score: \_\_ of 30

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STRENGTHS:

WEAKNESSES:

# Resources for Quality IRWs

## *Individual Review Rubric*

- Address Selection Criteria Only
- Consider Performance Measures appropriately
- Comments and Rating selection should be aligned
- Do not Address: suggestions for improvement, what “the panel thinks”, etc.
- Avoid making generic comments that can be applied to “any” application
  - (the applicant identified the community needs very well; or the alignment between the problem identified and the proposed solution was strong)

# Resources for Quality IRWs cont.

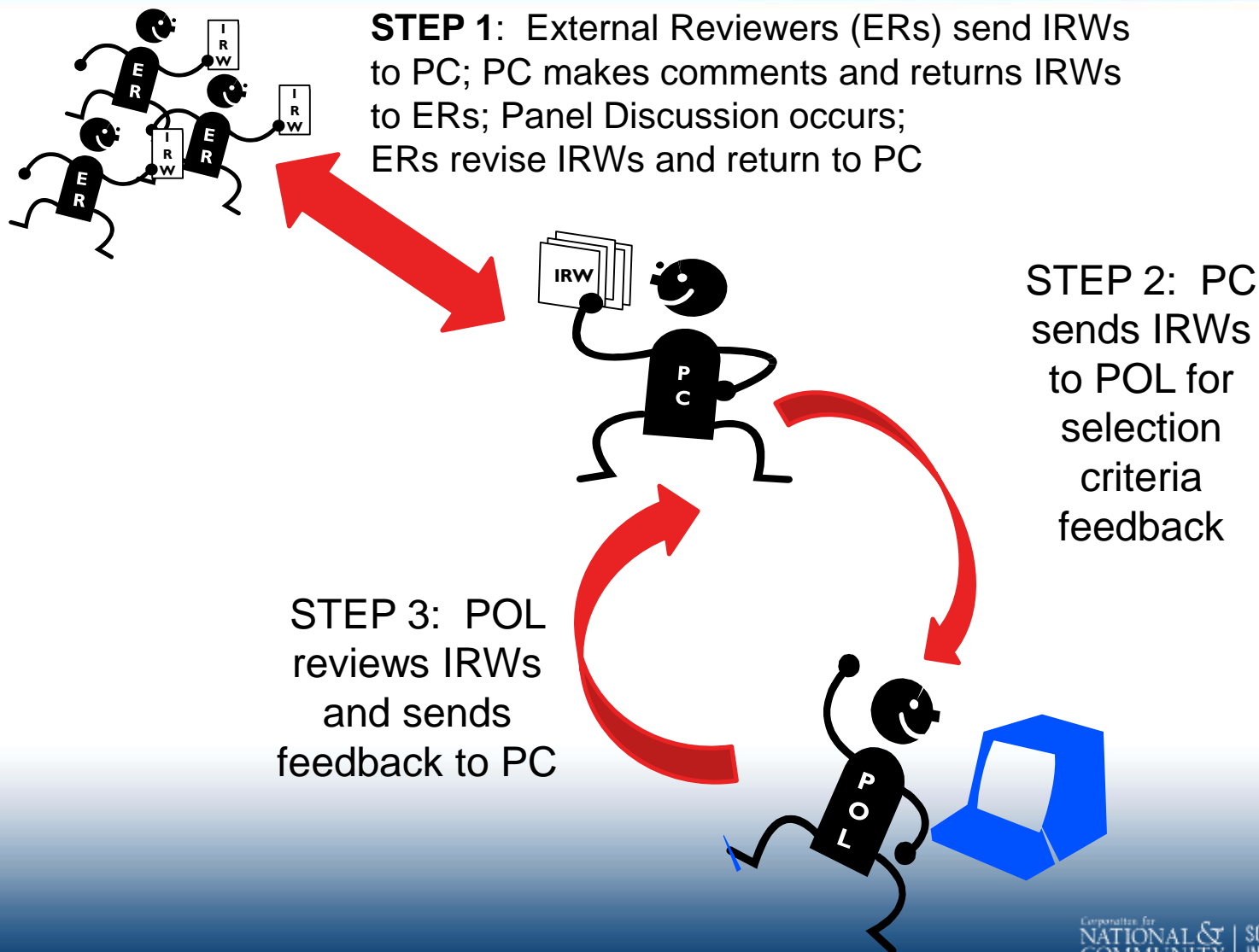
## *Writing Meaningful Comments & Example Evaluation IRW*

- Application information is limited to the reviewed application and no others (no comparisons with other applications, etc.)
- Language is evaluative and does not restate information from Application
- Comments are Strengths and Weaknesses with greatest impact on the Rating
- No inflammatory statements
- Avoid referencing Page Numbers
- Grammar and spelling are correct

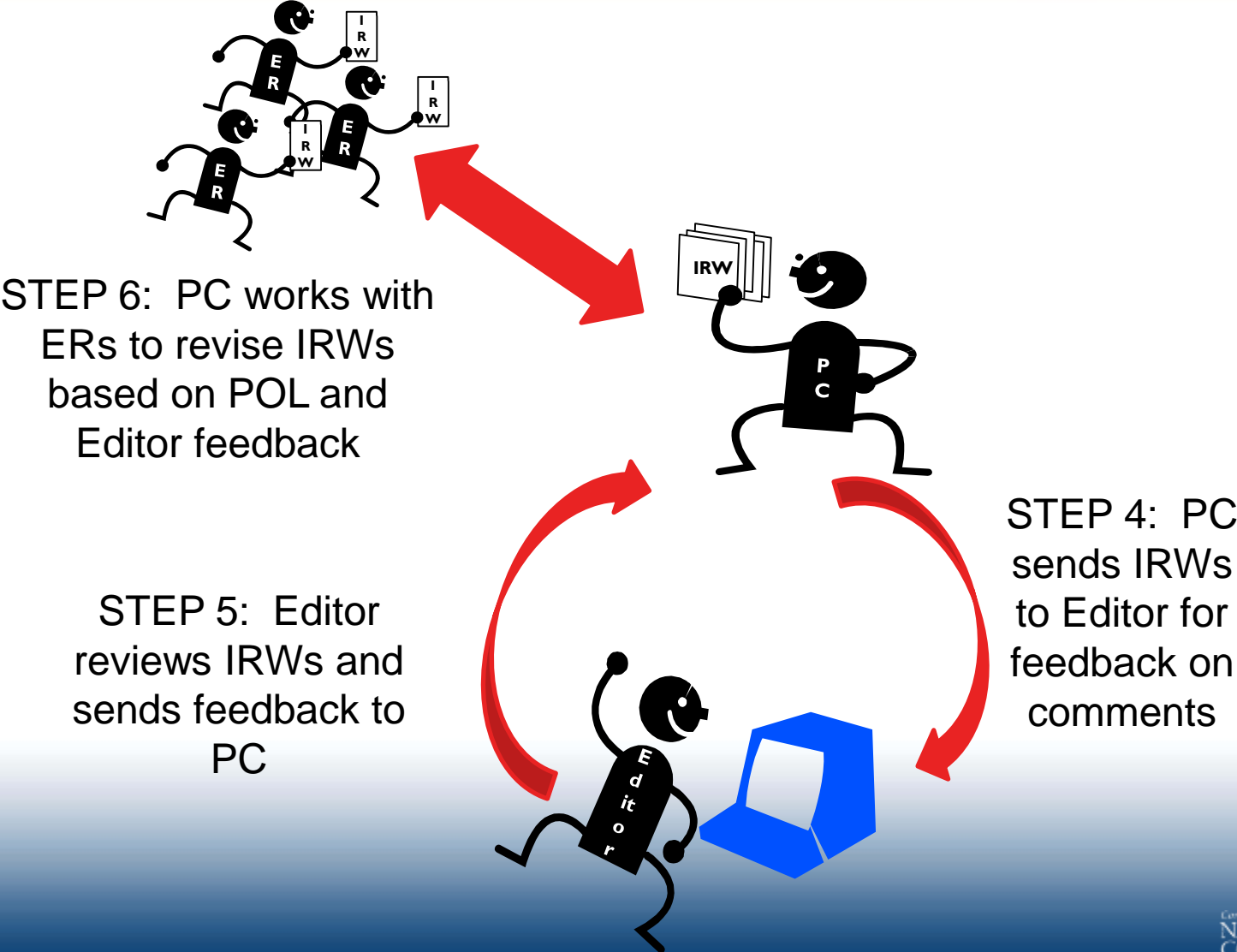
# Saving Your IRWs

- ▶ Save using naming convention:
  - ▶ “EIRW.legal applicant name.last four digits of application ID.Reviewer last name”
  - ▶ Example “EIRW.SuperApplicant.1234.Smith”

# The IRW Production Cycle steps 1-3



# The IRW Production Cycle steps 4-6



# Steps to Complete the Individual Reviewer Worksheet

- Step 1: Reviewer downloads the IRW blank document from the 2015 Reviewer Website.
- Step 2: Reviewer reviews an application and completes a draft IRW; Reviewer saves the IRW using the naming protocol.
  - (PIRW.legalapplicantname.1234.Jones) or
  - (EIRW.legalapplicantname.1234.Smith)
- Step 3: Reviewer sends the draft IRW to the PC for his/her review and feedback.
- Step 4: Reviewer incorporates any feedback from PC.
- Step 5: Reviewer Discusses Application with panel members and makes changes to IRW.
- Step 6: Reviewer sends updated IRW to PC, who sends panel's IRWs to the POL for selection criteria review.
- Step 7: POL provides feedback on the IRW, returns the IRW to the PC.
- Step 8: PC sends panel's IRWs to the Editor for IRW comments review.
- Step 9: Editor provides feedback on the IRW, returns the IRW to the PC.
- Step 10: PC sends IRW to Reviewer to incorporate POL and Editor feedback.
- Step 11: Reviewer sends final version to the PC.

# Reference Information

- Detail the steps of the External Review Process
  - Section 2.2 – The Grant Application Review Process
- Understand the review forms and how they are used
  - Section 3.2 – Key Review Forms
  - Appendix F – IRW Guidance
  - Appendix I – Individual Review Rubric
  - Appendix K – Example Program IRW
  - Appendix L – Writing Meaningful Comments
- Discuss your role in the review of the applications
  - Section 4.1 – Conducting the Individual Reviews
- For more information, consult the Handbook
  - Section 5.2.3 Completing the Individual Reviewer Worksheet (IRW)



# Ensuring Equitable Reviews

## 2015 Social Innovation Fund Review



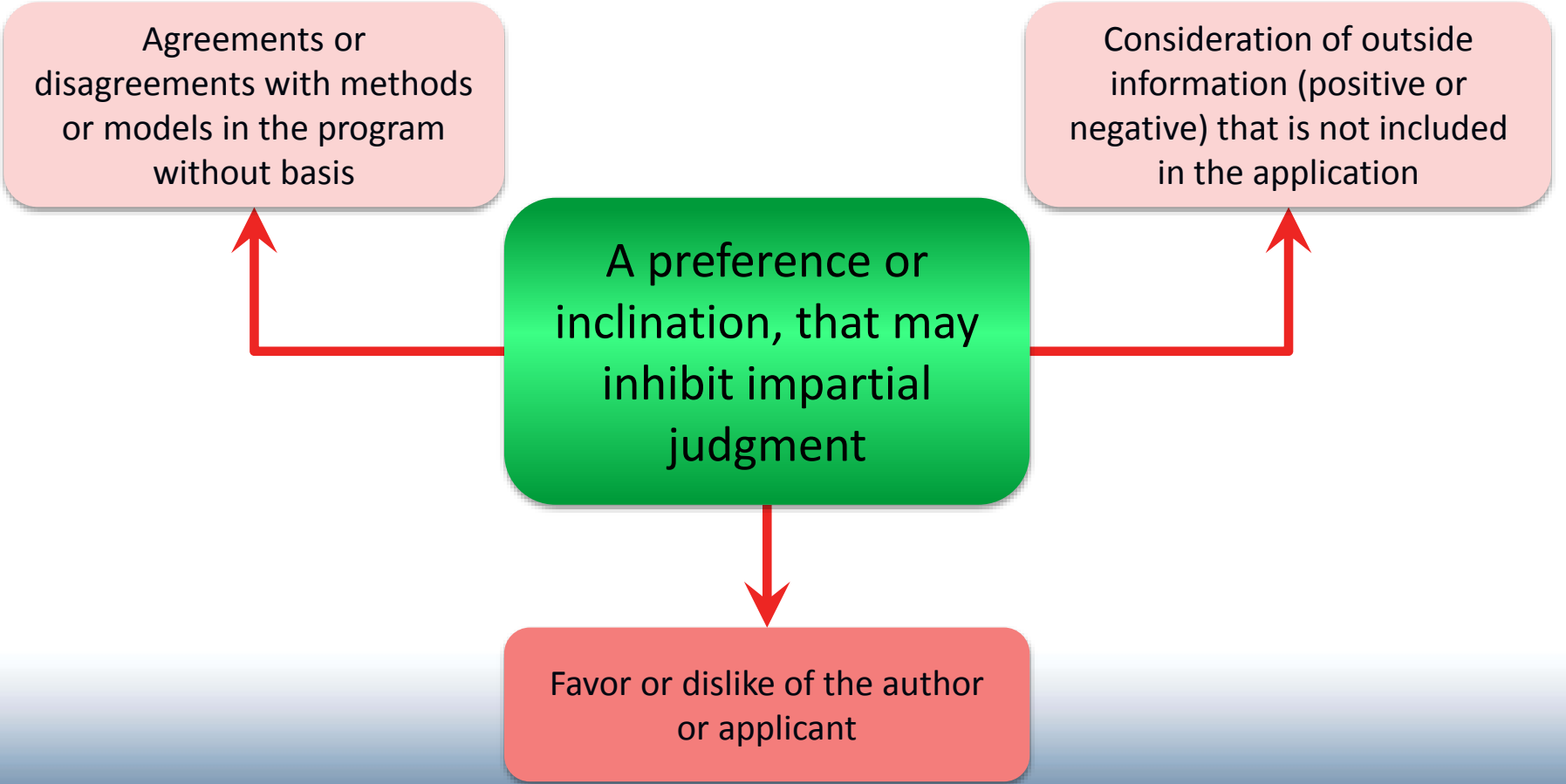
# Objectives

- Describe the importance of equity in the Review Process
- Define potential bias
- Describe Review Participant and CNCS responsibility in Conflict of Interest
- Outline steps to take if potential COI is identified
- List proper disposal methods for all confidential materials
- State the purpose of the Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Statement for Review Participants

# Equity in the External Review

- Ensure grant application is considered in a fair and equitable process
- Understand the Selection Criteria
- Share Responsibility as a Participant
  - Conflicts of Interest, Bias and Confidentiality

# What is Potential Bias?



# How to Handle Potential Bias



- Often it will be flagged by another participant
- Return to assessment and provide facts only to reconsider assessment
- Exercise consideration and respect, remove emotionalism
- Possible recusal from review of that application

# Conflicts of Interest

- Conflict between private interests and official responsibilities
- CNCS considers both Direct and Indirect COIs
- Consider those around you

# Direct and Indirect Examples of Conflicts of Interest

You are assigned to review an application for an organization for which:

- Has submitted an application in the present competition, or was personally involved in preparing an application
- Could personally benefit if an application submitted in the present competition is selected to receive funding
- Are currently being considered for employment, or (within the last 12 months) had an employment, consulting, advising, or other similar affiliation with the organization
- Holds any office or membership on the organization's governing board, visiting committee, similar body
- Directly own any securities or evidences of debt of the organization

# Direct and Indirect Examples of Conflicts of Interest cont.

You are assigned to review an application for an organization for which:

- Has a financial interest that would be affected by the outcome of this grant competition
- Is a currently enrolled student (in the case of an organization that is an educational institution)
- Has received and kept an honorarium or award from the organization within the last 12 months
- Has collaborated on a project or on a book, article, report, or paper with the organization within the last 48 months, or
- Had any other past or present business, professional, academic, volunteer, or other personal relationship with the organization that could reasonably call into question whether you can objectively participate in the current grant application review process.

# Importance of Reporting COIs

- Fair and equitable review
- Preserve integrity

## Who to Contact?

GARP Liaison and Panel Coordinator

# Confidential Information

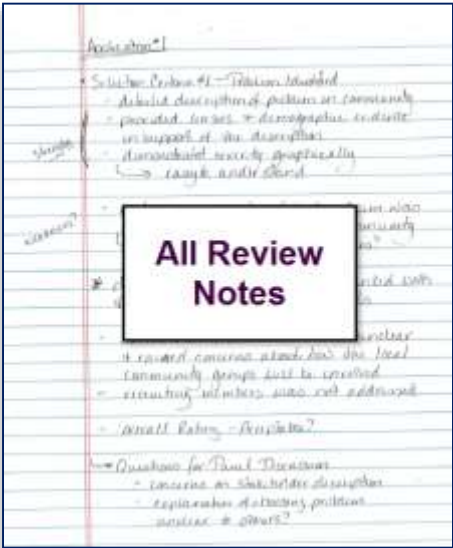
## Applicant Confidentiality

- Applicant names
- Applicant business information and financial data
- Details about the proposed program
- Review comments and review ratings

## Participant Confidentiality

- Identity of Review Participants during the review
- The link between Reviewers and their comments

# Proper Handling of Confidential Items



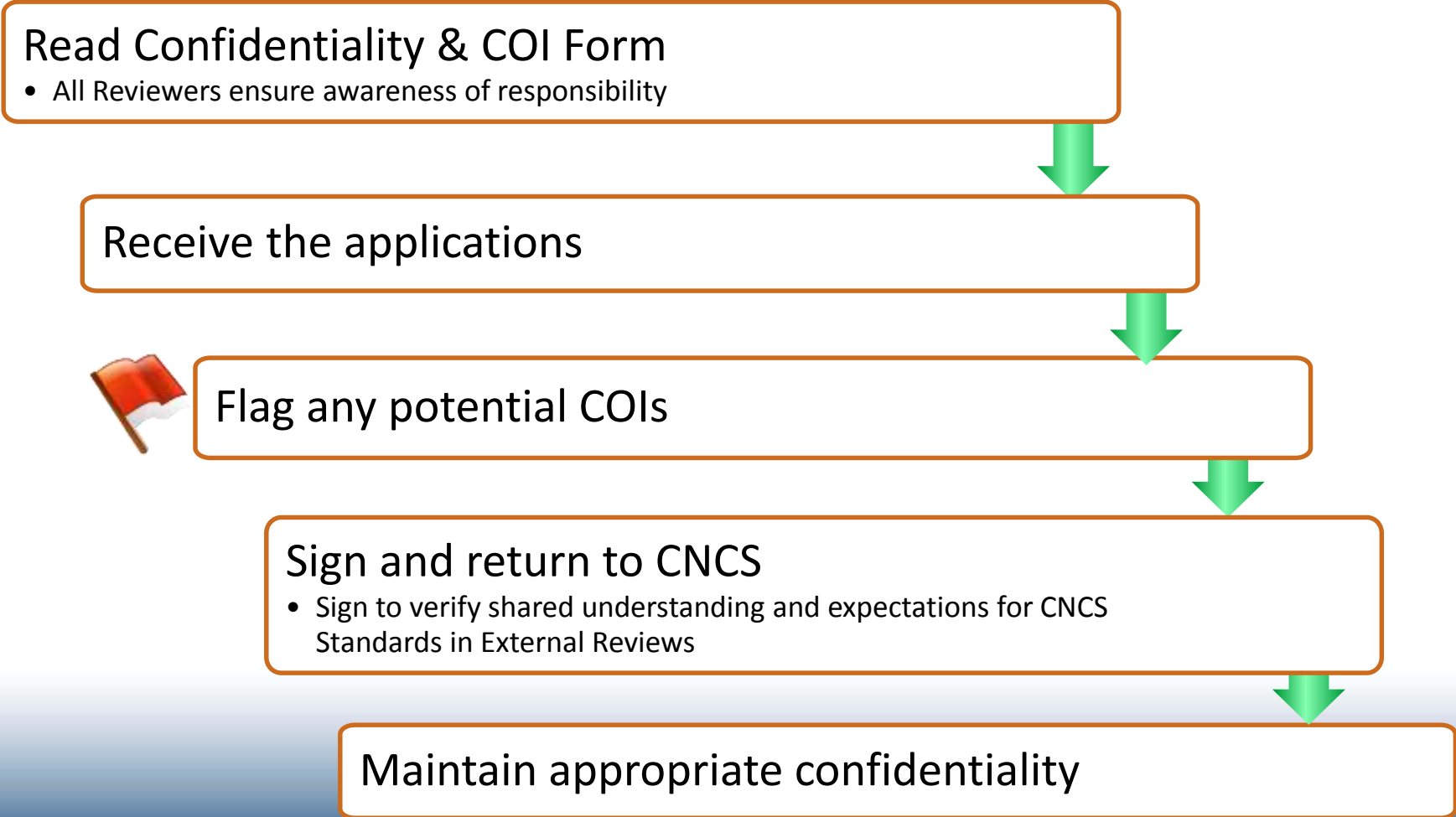
CONFIDENTIAL

A photograph of a form titled "PART 1 - FACE SHEET" and "APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE". The form contains various fields for personal information, contact details, and application specifics. A white rectangular box is placed over the center of the page with the text "All Applications" in bold black font. The form includes sections for "APPLICANT INFORMATION", "CONTACT INFORMATION", "APPLICATION INFORMATION", and "FEDERAL ASSISTANCE INFORMATION".

Reviewer  
Names

# Confidentiality and COI statement

## Process and Purpose



# Next Steps

- Continue Reading 2015 Social Innovation Fund Review Handbook
- Participate in Orientation Session V - Entering IRW Information
- Confirm Completion of Orientation IV
  - Email Secret Word to [PeerReviewers@cns.gov](mailto:PeerReviewers@cns.gov)

## Reference Material

- For more information, Consult the Handbook:
  - Section 3.3 – Ensuring Equitable Reviews
- Confidentiality and COI Form
  - Reviewer Resource Web page